

The FLAMING JEWEL

by ROBERT W. CHAMBERS
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Clinch's Dump.
CHAPTER I

When Mike Clinch bade Hal Smith return to the Dump and take care of Eve, Smith already had decided to go there.

Somewhere in Clinch's Dump was hidden the Flaming Jewel. Now was his time to search for it. There were two other reasons why he should go back. One of them was that Leverett was loose. If anything had called Trooper Stormont away, Eve would be alone in the house. And nobody on earth could forecast what a coward like Everett might attempt.

But there was another and more serious reason for returning to Clinch's. Clinch, blood-mad, was headed for Drowned Valley with his men, to stop both ends of that vast morass before Quintana and his gang could get out.

It was evident that neither Clinch nor any of his men—although their very lives depended upon familiarity with the wilderness—knew that a third exit from Drowned Valley existed.

And that was why Darragh, or Hal Smith, finally decided to return to Sar Pond—because if Quintana had been told or had discovered that circuitous way out of Drowned Valley, he might go straight to Clinch's Dump.

And, supposing Stormont was still there, how long could one State Trooper stand off Quintana's gang?

No sooner had Clinch and his motley followers disappeared in the dusk than Smith unslung his basket-pack, fished out a big electric torch, flashed it tentatively and then, reslinging the pack and taking his rifle in his left hand, he set off at an easy swinging stride.

For a long while he did not dare to use his torch; but now he was obliged to.

He shined the ground at his feet, elevated the torch with infinite precaution, throwing a fan-shaped light over the stretch of sink he had suspected and feared. It flung the flat, wet path of rock on either side. Here Death spread its slimy trap at his very feet.

Then, as he stood taking his bearings with burning torch, far ahead in the darkness a light flashed, went out, flashed twice more and was extinguished.

Quintana!

Smith's wits were working like lightning, but instinct guided him before his brain took command. He leveled his torch and repeated the three signal flashes. Then, in darkness, he came to swift conclusion.

For three hundred yards, counting his strides, he continued on. Then, in total darkness, he pocketed the torch, slid a cartridge into the breach of his rifle, slung the weapon, pulled out a handkerchief, and tied it across the face under the eyes.

He continued to move forward. After a little while his ear caught a slight splash ahead. Suddenly a glare of light enveloped him.

"Is it you, Harry Beck?"

Instinct led again while, with worked madly: "Harry Beck is two miles back on guard. Where is Sal?"

The silence became terrible. Once the glaring light in front moved, then became fixed. There was a light splashing. Instantly Smith realized that the man in front had set his torch in a tree-crotch and was now cowering somewhere behind a leveled weapon. His voice came presently:

"He! Drap-a that-a gun damm quick!"

Smith bent, leisurely and laid his rifle on a mossy rock.

"Now! You there! Why you want Sard's El?"

"Till tell Sard, not you," retorted Smith coolly. "You listen to me, whoever you are. I'm from Sard's office in New York. I'm Abrams. The police are on their way here to find Quintana."

A movement might have meant death, but he calmly rummaged for a cigarette, lit it, blew a cloud insolently toward the white glare ahead. Then he took another chance:

"I guess you're Nick Salzar, aren't you?"

"Sard! I am Salzar. Who the devil are you?"

"I'm Eddie Abrams, Sard's lawyer. My business is to find my client. If you stop me you'll go to prison—the whole gang of you—Sard, Quintana, Picquet, Sanchez, Georgiades and Harry Beck—and you!"

After a dead silence: "Maybe you'll go to the chair, too!"

It was the third chance he took.

There was a dreadful stillness in the woods. Finally came a slight series of splashes: the crunch of heavy boots on rock.

"For why you com-a here, eh?" demanded Salzar, in a less aggressive manner. "What-a da matt, eh?"

"Well," said Smith, "if you've got to know, there are people from Esthonia in New York. If you understand that."

"Christ! When do they arrive?"

A week ago, Sard's place is in the hands of the police. I couldn't stop them. They've got his safe and all his papers. City, state, and federal officers are looking for him. The contabulary rode into Ghost Lake yesterday. Now, don't you think you'd better lead me to Sard?"

"Christ!" exclaimed Salzar. "Sard he is a mile ahead with the others! Damn! Damn! Me, how should I know what is to be done? Me, I have my orders from Quintana. What I do, eh? Christ! What to do? What you say I should do, eh, Abrams?"

A new fear had succeeded the old one—that was evident—and Salzar came forward into the light of his own fixed torch—a well-knit figure in slouch hat, gray shirt, and gray



"NOW, TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF IS YOU CAN"

quietly took his weapon from him and laid it beside his own.

"What-a da-matt?" demanded Salzar, astonished. "Why you tak-a-my gun?"

Smith measured him. They were well matched.

"Set your torch in that crotch," he said.

Salzar, puzzled and impatient, demanded to know why. Smith

rock both torches, set them opposite each other and drew Salzar into the white glare.

"Now," he said, "you dirty desperado, I am going to try to kill you clean. Look out for yourself!"

For a second Salzar stood rooted in blank astonishment.

"I'm one of Clinch's men," said Smith, "but I can't stick a knife in your back, at that! Now take care of yourself if you can—"

His voice died in his throat; Salzar was on him, chewing, biting, kicking, striving to strangle him, to wrestle him off his feet. Smith reeled, staggering under the sheer rush of the man, almost blinded by blows, clutching, bewildered in Salzar's panther grip.

"I feel you! I feel you! Damn! Damn!" panted Salzar, in convulsive fury as Smith freed his left arm and struck him in the face.

Now, on the narrow, wet and slippery strip of rock they swayed to and fro, murderously interlocked, their heavy boots splashing, battling with limb and body.

Twice Salzar forced Smith outward over the slick, trying to end it, but could not free himself.

Once, to, he managed to get a hidden knife, drew it out and stab at head and throat; but Smith caught the fist that wielded it, forced back the arm, held it while Salzar screamed at him, lunging at his face with bared teeth.

Suddenly the end came: Salzar's body heaved upward, sprawled for an instant in the dazzling glare, hurtled over Smith's head

and fell into the sink with a crashing splash.

Frantically he thrashed there, spluttering and floundering in darkness. He made no outcry. Probably he had landed head first.

In a moment only a vague heaving came from the unseen ooze.

Smith, exhausted, drenched with sweat, leaned against a tamarack, sickened.

After all sound had ceased he straightened up with an effort. Presently he bent and recovered Salzar's red bandanna and his hat, lifted his own rifle and pack and struggled into the harness. Then, kicking Salzar's rifle overboard, he unfastened both torches, pocketed one, and started on in a flood of ghostly light.

(Continued in Next Issue)

ROOSEVELT, GRANT AND NAPOLEON AT GRAVES DESCRIBED

Another Travelogue-Sermon
Delivered Last Night by
Dr. Broomfield.

The travelogue addresses being delivered on Sunday evening at the Protestant Temple by Dr. J. C. Broomfield are attracting wide attention and large crowds fill the church each Sunday evening. So realistic are the descriptions given that some are remarking with a smile "He is making it unnecessary for us to go to Europe." The address last night gathered about the grave of Quentin Roosevelt in France, the tomb of Napoleon in Paris and that of General Grant in New York.

The address opened with a reference to the impressiveness of standing by a grave, and to the orderliness of all the proceedings about a grave.

The audience was somewhat surprised to hear Doctor Broomfield tell of an altogether new experience he had in conducting the service around a grave recently, where it seemed as though a smoldering volcano of family bitterness would break forth and desecrate the burial of the dead. He referred to it as a new revelation to him of the hideousness of sin in a human heart.

The first tomb described by Doctor Broomfield was that of Napoleon Bonaparte in the Hotel des Invalides in Paris. Hotel in this connection means hall.

He called the attention of the audience to the fact that there have been four Napoleons in French history, but only one Bonaparte.

He traced his spectacular and marvelous career from his birth on August 15, 1769, on the island of Corsica, to his death in exile on the island of St. Helena, a thousand miles at sea, on May 5, 1821. The defeat at Moscow and at Waterloo were described, but Doctor Broomfield claimed that Napoleon was defeated in his own life before he was defeated on any of the battlefields of Europe and in support of the contention he cited the deliberate casting aside of Empress Josephine in the divorce he granted December 16, 1809 and his marriage to Marie Louise, daughter of Emperor Francis of Austria. Doctor Broomfield contrasted Napoleon on December 2, 1804, the dominant figure in all Europe standing in the church of the Notre Dame, taking from the altar the crown and with his own hands placing it upon his head, thus crowning himself

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AGNES AYRES in "BORDERLAND"

emperor of France, with the Napoleon of May 5 overtaken by death on lonely St. Helena, and embittered with his gaily quarrels with his jailer, Sir Hudson Lowe. All this, said the speaker, was passing through his mind as he stood last July by the sarapobagus, in the pit under the dome of the Hotel Des Invalides where in 1840 the French government placed the remains of their greatest emperor. The pit was described as being circular and about ten feet deep. In its center was a green marble pedestal and on it a chocolate colored marble casket inscribed in mosaic on the floor of the pit the names of the great battles in which Napoleon had been victorious but no mention is made of Moscow or Waterloo. Flooding the pit as a result of purple panels of glass in the high dome, was a sad, funeral light, and the words that came to the speaker's lips as he stood there were, "We all do fade as a leaf."

In striking contrast with all this was the double high altar that separates the rotunda where the body of Napoleon rests from the chapel. Immense, variegated, screw like marble pillars support the canopy of the altar and within the canopy an almost life-size figure of Christ on the Cross.

The sun, pouring in through orange colored glass in the dome, flooded the Christ and Cross and altar with shimmering golden light. Standing between the tomb with its purple light and the cross with its golden rays; between the absence of the names of battles lost on the one hand; and the picture of Christ's human defeat on the other, Doctor Broomfield said that he lifted his heart to God in thanks for a love expressed on Calvary that is conquering the world, rather than the force exercised by a Napoleon or a Kaiser.

Leading up to the story of his visit to the lonely grave of Quentin Roosevelt, Doctor Broomfield explained as a background the second battle of the Marne, launched on July 18, 1918, and continuing until July 25. Thirty per cent of the Allies engaged were Americans. No greater surprise was given to the Germans during the war, than was the launching by the "big white" French aided by the Americans of a general attack on a thirty mile front, stretching from Chateau Thierry to Soissons. It was wholly unexpected. Every branch of the land forces cooperated. There was retirement all along the line, and thousands of Germans, many of them the best soldiers left in the German army, were captured. Among the airmen cooperating in the assault was Quentin Roosevelt, son of the former president. He was killed by a German named Groeper. Two shots in the head brought him down. He was buried by the Germans with full military honors. Twelve American and seven German fliers had been engaged in battle when young Roosevelt and the German drew away from the rest and engaged in a duel in which the greater experience of the German

Quentin's plane fell near the village of Chamey, south of Rheims. He was buried where he fell, and

his personal effects were carefully kept and forwarded to his father. In response to the many expressions of sympathy sent to the father, he said: "My only regret is that I am unable to fight beside my sons." His request was that "he should continue to lie where he fell in battle and where the foeman had buried him." The outstanding facts in the case, stood out before Doctor Broomfield's mind when on a bright afternoon last July he stood by the lonely grave away off from the main road in one of the fields of a little farm and read on the modest tombstone there: "He has soared beyond the shadow of our night."

The visit to the tomb of General Grant, the next day after their arrival from Europe, was also described and the inscription over the entrance, "Let us have peace" was dwelt upon.

It seemed to Doctor Broomfield as he stood in front of it a few weeks ago to be out an echo from the Judean hills of "Peace on earth, good will among men."

All three graves visited were those of men of war. The speaker insisted that the obligation was upon him to leave his audience not at the grave of Napoleon or a Grant, or a Roosevelt, but at the grave of one who is the Prince of Peace and destined to conquer. The ordinary and extraordinary folks gathered around the tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea and occupied by Jesus, were described and again the words of one of the extraordinary were heard "He is not here, he is risen," and he said, "Come see the place where the Lord lay."

"Inspired with the experience at that grave," declared Doctor Broomfield, "we can stand by every grave on earth and by our own in anticipation and say 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'"

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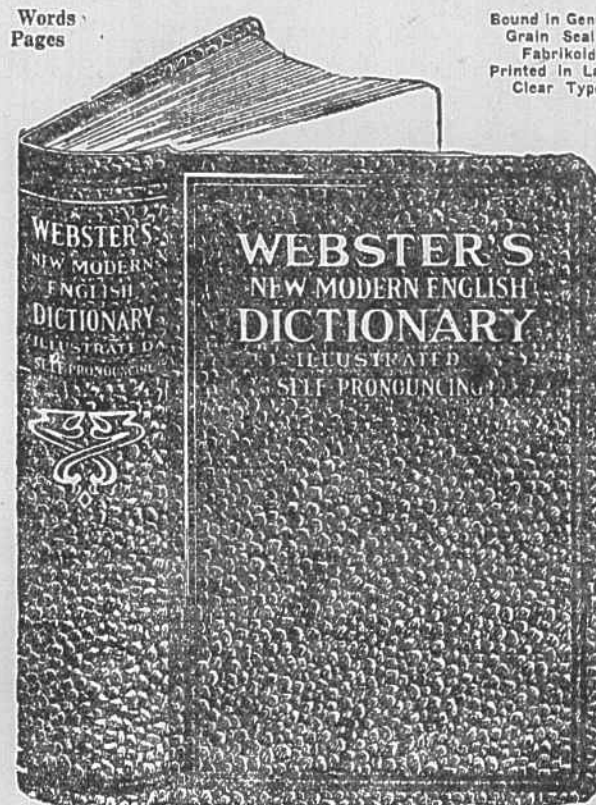
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